



Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities

Celebrating 31 Years of Leadership & Advocacy



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Janet A. Neal
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Vice Chair

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MINUTES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, September 20, 2006, at Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Room 374, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Neal at 1:20 p.m. Introduction of Commissioners, Staff and audience members followed.

APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 16, 2006 MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Troost, seconded by Commissioner Siegel, and duly carried, (Commissioner Weller abstained) the minutes for the meeting of August 16, 2006 were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Donna Pomerantz, announced that the Community Rehabilitation Services Independent Living Center would be hosting a Voter's Rights Education event on September 25th at 4716 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, Building A, Los Angeles, CA. California Secretary of State, Bruce McPherson will be addressing voter's rights and the availability of accessible voting information for the upcoming November election. Other highlights of the event include a workshop on security for people with disabilities at polling places; accessible voting equipment; and practice sessions and demonstrations on the operation of the new accessible voting equipment. For additional information, contact Donna Pomerantz at (323) 266-0453 Voice or (323) 266-1850 TTY.

Linda Block expressed her opposition to the proposed NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) Super Highway, a ten-lane highway that

would run from Mexican across the U.S. border, and up to Canada to facilitate the transportation of goods from Mexico to Canada.

Ms. Block also spoke about a petition to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Senators Feinstein and Boxer in opposition to the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SSP) Act created by President George Bush to promote growth, competitiveness and quality of life to North America.

Donna Dougherty spoke about the status of the opening of the Griffith Park Observatory in November this year, stating that following its opening, the Observatory intends to restrict visitors to entering the facility through one entrance only, located at the rear west wing of the building. This entrance was originally planned as the accessible entrance for persons with disabilities, however now that the entrance is going to be used as the main entrance to the building, Ms. Dougherty feels that this may pose a safety risk to people with mobility issues should visitors have to evacuate the building quickly.

Ms. Dougherty also stated that she, along with members from other disability groups and advocates, would be meeting with City Councilman LaBonge on September 25th to tour the Observatory and evaluate its accessibility.

STAFF REPORT

Mrs. Ward reported the following:

- The 2006 Access Awards Luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, October 18, 2006 at the Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 5th floor dining room. Tickets for the event are \$75 per person.
- The actor Jack Black has donated \$1,500 for the luncheon and Northrop Grumman has pledged to contribute \$6,000.

Chair Neal reported that she has recruited the singing trio, Outta Sight, to perform at the luncheon. These singers are blind and sing popular tunes from the 50's and 60's.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Neal reported that the KTYM Radio Show has received a tremendous response from listeners who have expressed an interest in knowing more about the Commission and its activities and other disability events being held throughout the community.

Deanna McNealy from the City Commission was also on the show this morning to promote the upcoming Seventh Annual Accessible City Expo being held on October 5th. Chair Neal encouraged everyone to attend the Expo and take advantage of the many free services and workshops being offered which includes resume preparation, confidential HIV rapid-testing, and other vendor giveaways. Parking is free to the event with a flyer.

Executive Committee Report

Vice Chair Krzyzanowski reported that the Executive Committee met today and discussed Commissioner attendance and reviewed the Commission Ordinance and Bylaws. Following discussion, the Committee agreed to the following:

- To send a letter to Commissioners regarding attendance and meeting absence reporting.
- Further review the Commission's Bylaws and Ordinance.
- Re-examine the issue of Commissioner stipends with County Counsel.
- Review the mandate in the Ordinance that states liaisons from other County departments and disability related agencies must have a representative from that agency attend Commission meetings.

(Commissioner Chambers joined the meeting)

Chair Neal introduced and welcomed Commissioner Mary Chambers who is the newest member appointed to the Commission by Supervisor Molina. Commissioner Chambers offered some information about her professional

background saying that she is an attorney and worked for many years in Washington D.C., including on the passage of the ADA. Currently she has her own practice as a consultant mostly for nonprofit organizations and foundations.

PRESENTATION ON QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM – MAGALI WILLIAMS

Ms. Magali Williams reported that she is the Administrator for the In Home Support Services (IHSS) Program in Los Angeles County and is currently assigned to supervise the Quality Assurance Program for IHSS.

Ms. Magali advised that the Quality Assurance Program was created as a result of the passage of SB 1104 by the California Department of Public Social Services. The program called for several mandates which included:

1) the implementation of a comprehensive statewide training program on conducting client assessments; 2) enhancement of technology for improved case tracking; and 3) development of measures to detect fraud and prevent abuse of the program. The goal of the Quality Assurance Program is to ensure the program's integrity and that every consumer is given a fair and accurate assessment of services needed.

Quality Assurance workers duties include monitoring the assessments conducted by social workers, conducting client reviews quarterly, and within the course of a calendar year, reviewing client's case records. Also, periodic follow-up home calls are conducted to ensure social worker's assessments are consistent with what is found in the home. Oversight and annual reviews of the County's Quality Assurance Program are the responsibility of the State.

The most recent development for the Quality Assurance Program is the implementation of standardized hourly guidelines for IHSS workers. Ms. Magali stated these guidelines have been a major issue of concern for

advocates, consumers and providers. Consumers believe that the standardized guidelines will reduce the amount of time IHSS workers are allowed to spend on each task performed. Ms. Magali stated that this is not the case.

The standardized hourly guidelines are intended to assist the social workers in providing assessments that are fair and accurate. In addition to the training, social workers have the guidelines to aid them in preparing assessments. If need be, social workers have the authority to go beyond the guidelines to make recommendations that ensure the individual needs of each client are sufficiently met.

Ms. Magali responded to questions about funding reductions of the program, stating that to her knowledge, reductions have been targeted to address fraud issues and reduce abuses related to the program.

Following a question and answer period, Chair Neal thanked Ms. Williams for her informative presentation and asked Ms. Williams to return at a later date to give an update on the program.

PRESENTATION ON WWW.ANIQUE.COM – BRUCE KASPER

Mr. Bruce Kasper stated that his daughter, Anique Jaqueline Kasper, died in July of 1992 from AIDS. Following his daughter's tragic death, he learned from various sources, in particular from a representative from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) conducting a "look-back study", that when his daughter was an infant at Cedars Sinai Hospital, she was infused with blood from a donor who subsequently died from AIDS. Mr. Kasper also learned that there were a total of 114 children infused with HIV infected blood, and that Cedars had active knowledge of this happening. Mr. Kasper brought with him to the meeting, one of the three survivors who received the contaminated blood.

Mr. Kasper has been trying for several years to obtain the hospital records for his daughter from the County Health Department, and from the Center for Disease Control (CDC). He received notification from both agencies

that the documents had been destroyed, contrary to guidelines that mandate those types of records should be kept permanently.

To date, Mr. Kasper still has not been able to get any documentation or information in relation to his daughter's death. He has again requested the documents from the Cedar Sinai Medical Center, the CDC, and has asked for assistance from County Supervisors, without success. If the documentation has indeed been destroyed, Mr. Kasper would like to know who authorized their destruction, and have the matter investigated as soon as possible.

Mr. Kasper stated he would like to see three things come from the tragic death of his daughter: 1) legislation requiring health care providers to immediately notify parents of small children or any patient of information they find that pertains to a patient's health; 2) the passage of the Steve Grissom Relief Fund Act and extension of the provisions of the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act; and 3) the FBI to look into the matter.

The Commission offered to assist Mr. Kasper in getting the information he needs.

DISABILITIES CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE SECTION (DCRCS)

This item was deferred to the next meeting agenda in November 2006.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

On motion of Commissioner Gureckas, seconded by Commissioner Weller, unanimously carried, the items under Committee Reports were deferred to the meeting agenda in November 2006, with the exception of the Public Relations Committee Report.

Public Relations Committee

Vice-Chair Krzyzanowski reported that he attended the Board of Supervisors meeting held Tuesday, September 19th to inform them about

the Access Awards Luncheon and request their participation and sponsorship for the event. He also reported that he participated on behalf of the Commission as an exhibitor at the Commission for Women's 8th Annual 5K Run/Walk & Health Expo for Girls at Risk which led to many good contacts and networking for the Commission on Disabilities.

ITEMS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA TO BE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deanna McNeally, from the City Commission on Disability, announced that she has supplied the Commission with over 2900 mailing contacts to assist with disseminating information about the Access Awards Luncheon. In addition, her Commission is promoting the luncheon on their website.

Vice Chair Krzyzanowski announced that he participated in the California Network of Mental Health Clients, Mental Health Association of Los Angeles, Project Return. This event was a memorial held in remembrance of mental health clients that were forgotten by family members in institutional facilities.

Commissioner Rubenstein suggested that a letter be sent to the Board of Supervisors requesting that accessible electronic doors be installed at the entrances to their offices on the eighth floor of the Hall of Administration.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion of Vice-Chair Krzyzanowski, seconded by Commissioner Weller, unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Janet A. Neal, Chair
Richard Krzyzanowski, Vice Chair

Excused Absence

Ruth Ann Acosta
Ernest T. Hamilton, Jr.

Mary Chambers
Michael Gureckas
Bernard Siegel
Harley D. Rubenstein
Alexia Teran
John B. Troost
Kecia Weller, Treasurer
Sheila Wright

Unexcused Absence

Viola Vivian Corbett
Wendy Welt

Board of Supervisors

Sandra Barbee, Division Chief
Dedie Ward, Staff
Martha Arana, Staff

County of Los Angeles

Kurt C. Hagen

MTA

Chip Hazen

ASI

Arun Prem
Andre Colaiace

Guests

Ronnie C. Ellis
Roxie Ortiz
Carlton Lindo
Marvin White
Deanna McNeally
Donna Pomerantz
Bruce Kasper

Tom Cavagnero
Blanca Quesada
Mary Griffith
Hugh Hallenberg
Donald Brandon
Dr. Dennis W. O'Brien
Allan M. Abrams

Jesse Padilla
Erika D. Gutierrez
Hilda Nunez
Donna Dougherty
Linda Block
Alex Gharffari